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SUBJECT: RECOGNITION OF LOCAL TIP HERO RAISES AWARENESS

REF: A. MANAMA 320

[1](#)B. MANAMA 363

[1](#)1. (SBU) The Department's 2008 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report recognized Bahraini activist Marrieta Dias as a "Hero" for her years of volunteer work and advocacy on behalf of migrant workers in Bahrain. The recognition of Dias, coupled with Bahrain's removal from Tier Three, attracted extensive coverage in all local dailies and several reports and features on Bahrain television. The media treated the two developments in almost every case as a positive story. Arabic papers have run a spate of stories on migrant workers.

On June 18 Akhbar Al Khaleej, usually not supportive of U.S. initiatives, ran an opinion column by Salwa Al Moayyed under the headline "Where are the rights for migrant workers?" A journalist with Al-Waqt requested an interview with poloff about TIP. A few news opinion columnists grumbled against U.S. evaluation of other countries on TIP or any other issue, but even these isolated voices acknowledged Dias' achievements.

[1](#)2. (U) Post took advantage of the local media's focus on TIP by arranging a press availability for Dias, attended by local English and Arabic print dailies and Bahrain TV. Bahrain TV aired a segment on Dias and the TIP report on its main news program on June 13. All of the papers published a report of their interview on June 13 and June 14. Dias told the reporters that TIP remains a significant problem in Bahrain, and combating it requires constant, coordinated effort between governments in receiving and sending countries. Dias praised the IOM's ongoing USG-funded program (ref A) for successfully raising awareness of TIP and providing much needed training for government officials and civil society activists.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Print and electronic media also covered CDA's reception in honor of Dias on June 12. Attendees included Bahrain Human Rights Society SecGen Abdulla Al Derazi, and Nabeel Rajab, the Vice President of the (unlicensed) Bahrain Center for Human Rights. Sending-country ambassadors, MFA MinState Nizar Al Baharna, and other GOB officials were also there.

[1](#)4. (SBU) Comment: Bahrain's removal from Tier Three and the recognition of Dias as a TIP "Hero" have produced a new and productive surge in public and GOB awareness of the continuing trafficking problem in Bahrain.

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